



Baba Budh Singh to Satguru Hari Singh Ji

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The circumstances in which
Baba Budh Singh Ji
became
Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji
and the restrictions imposed by the British Raj.

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In the year 1872, Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji was deported from Ludhiana to a place where no-one would be able to find them, at least that is what the British government hoped. A place where no one would be able to communicate with Satchi Patshah Ji or meet with them and in return the British government anticipated the Kooka movement to fade out, so that they could once again rule over India unopposed.

Due to the nature of Satchi Patshah Ji's deportation there was little to no time for them to address their sangat. They were unable to name their successor. It was only when a police officer, in Allahabad, asked Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji "who should we give the keys of Sri Bhaini Sahib to?" Satguru Ji replied "my brother". The community named Baba Budh Singh Ji their 'Sir Karta' and Baba Budh Singh Ji put Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji's Kharavan on the assan. In 1875, 3 years later, Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji's location was found and Baba Darbara Singh Ji brought back the first piece of communication, the first hukamnama.

Unfortunately, the hukamnama had to be destroyed to prevent it reaching into the hands of the British government. It contained a hukam for the sangat, '**Aaj tho Budh Singh Ji da naam Hari Singh hoya, mere tho piche e hi Sikhi Hari Rakhe ga, ena de dhake nu mein nahi bakshanga te mere dhake nu e hi baksh sag de ne**'. Translated into English this meant: From now onwards Budh Singh Ji's name is Hari Singh, in my absence he will keep Sikhism evergreen (alive), I will not forgive those who do not accept him but he can forgive those who do not respect me. Whilst being so far away Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji instilled all Guru Qualities and power into Satguru Hari Singh Ji, instantly preparing them for their new role.

Out of all the names Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji could have chosen for their brother, they specifically chose 'Hari'. Yes, it is associated with keeping our faith evergreen but it is also the name which is associated with saving the world time and time again. It is the name which prefixes many devas, for e.g.: Hare Krishna, Hare Ram, Hari Om and Guru Gobind Singh Ji uses it repeatedly throughout Gurbani.

During this time period the population in Panjab was approximately 3 million people and more than 1 million had started following Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji's teachings. After Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji was deported the sangat started gathering in Sri Bhaini Sahib. They sold their possessions, their valuables, and their land and reconvened in Sri Bhaini Sahib truly believing this was the time to stand up against the British government's cruelty. This terrified the British Government and they

immediately put strict restrictions in place to suppress the building momentum of the Kookas.

They thought this would be achievable by removing all sangat who had gathered in Sri Bhaini Sahib, hiding Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji's location from us and encasing Sri Bhaini Sahib in a jail like setting. The Gur-Parivar was placed under house arrest and the population of Sri Bhaini Sahib was reduced from 200 to just 20 people. Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji was not allowed to leave Sri Bhaini Sahib or meet with the sangat. The sangat was not allowed to come into Sri Bhaini Sahib. There was a 24 hour police patrol in Sri Bhaini Sahib, to stop all communications. Drums used to be played in the local villages to try and scare the Kookas. They used to threaten and scare them to stop practising their faith. Most of those who were caught practising Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji's teachings, or trying to enter Sri Bhaini Sahib or trying to communicate with Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji were given unfair and harsh punishments. They were either fined, sent to kala pani jail or hanged. There have been an uncountable number of shaheeds, as no record of them or their punishments were kept.

In spite of these harsh conditions the sangat would risk their lives to meet with Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji, whether by hiding in the nearby fields or by using the night as their camouflage. It was because of these stolen moments that Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji was able to keep the Kooka movement ongoing. The revolt against the British Raj was still alive.

Whilst being confined within Sri Bhaini Sahib, where there was little to no communication, in an era of no photographs, no phones, no internet Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji

was able to connect with the sangat and make their own place in the hearts of the people. Just like Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji had predicted, m Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji.

After a while, the house arrest was eased and gatherings of 10 people at a time were allowed to meet Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji, but anyone who had come once would not be allowed to return for a further 6 months.

The Sangat would still come to visit and Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji's name became known far and wide. Anyone who had any ailments or who would not get better were convinced to go to Sri Bhaini Sahib and Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji became known to heal all those who came to them.

There was a person named Rattan Singh who lived in Khotte village during that time period. He was bitten by an astray dog and became unwell and used to physically attack his family members. His family members had to tie him up and took him to Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji. It is said that Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji had the persona of a calming sea and as soon as Rattan Singh laid eyes on Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji he too became calm. On return to his home-town his neighbours asked him where did you receive your treatment from and he replied 'Mera vaid mera Guru Hari Singh hai'.

In the year 1890, Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji was born and in the same year the rules imposed on Sri Bhaini Sahib were relaxed. It was after a further 6 years, when Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji was 6 year old, that Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji was

allowed to leave Sri Bhaini Sahib on their first dhaura. This was after a total of 24 years of gruelling house arrest. Each time they left Sri Bhaini Sahib they required permission from the government. Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji tells us that the police continued to follow Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji and then subsequently Sri Satguru Partap Singh Ji. Sri Bhaini Sahib was under house arrest for a total of 51 years. We have been in quarantine for only a few months and it has been incredibly hard, imagine 51 years of not being able to communicate or not being allowed to leave the premises. For the duration of Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji's time Sri Bhaini Sahib was under house arrest and strict restrictions were imposed on the Namdharis. Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji teaches us that all of this was tolerated for our religion and for our country.

It is important to note that since childhood Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji never disobeyed his elder brother. They never questioned or refused Satguru Ji's wishes. They always kept a "neevi naazar" did naam simran and seva. They never tried to take Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji's place. 'There was a small gate in Sri Bhaini Sahib, once lockdown was relaxed some of the sangat members went to fix it and thought to replace it with a larger one. Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji responded **"Minu sirf langar chalan da hukam hai – hor nahi"** this just shows the love and admiration Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji had for His brother and how they were just waiting for Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji to come back.

Even though during this time period Sri Satguru Hari Singh Ji had very little physical contact with their sangat, very little interaction, they were still able to radiate the name and works of Sri Satguru Ram Singh Ji. It didn't matter how hard the

British government confined them or how much the government threatened the sangat, they were unsuccessful in breaking the bond between guru and disciple. It is due to this, which we are all here. If that connection hadn't been established, if that bond had not been formed the kookas would have been a forgotten sect.

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